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**We Fought Cancer, and the Side Effects of Chemotherapy,
With An Homemade Formula—So Far We've Won!**

By Karen Haws (ex-name withheld)

If your child had a life-threatening disease, what would you do? Karen [Haws'] third child went through months of chemotherapy, but not without the help of an high-potency homemade baby formula and her parents' faith in God. What could have been a very difficult period for a very young child turned out to be less traumatic than anyone had dreamed. The results opened the eyes of her doctors and we hope will provide you with an interesting blend of approaches to one of life's toughest situations.

After our third child, Chrystal Dawn, was born the pediatrician examined her and reported to my husband, Dennis, that she had a tiny imperfection in her palate, a small cleft at the back of her mouth which "would not cause her any trouble." He could fix it with a couple of stitches when she was about a year old. Unknown to anyone, she probably had at that time a tiny tumor on her left kidney which was to grow in size for the next eight months until it completely replaced the kidney. That tiny cleft palate which was not supposed to cause any trouble caused a great deal of trouble, and in my opinion, probably saved her life.

While in the hospital, I tried valiantly to breastfeed little Chrystal; but every attempt failed and she became dehydrated. In spite of the smallness of her defect, she just could not suck. We resorted to a breast pump and gave her breast milk by bottle using a slit nipple. I continued using a breast pump as long as possible, but that just didn't provide the stimulation necessary to insure a good supply. As my supply diminished, I was forced to resort to formula feeding.

The last thing I would ever do to one of my children is subject them to the commercially prepared, over-advertised, plastic formulas with their sugar, artificial milk, salt, and synthetic vitamins. I pored over all of the nutritional articles and books I had, especially Adelle Davis' Let's Have Healthy Children, and put together a formula that provided more than the necessary nutrients for her proper development.

Kentucky law does not allow certified raw milk, considering it to be unsafe. My parents had an herd of goats, but they were too far away in Virginia to be accessible; so I was forced to use a combination of canned evaporated milk and homogenized milk. In spite of the use of inferior milk, the effect of our formula on her health was astounding. She never had colds or an infection of any kind, grew physically very rapidly, was bright and alert when she was awake, and was the happiest baby I've ever

seen. She never cried loudly and only fussed occasionally when she was hungry.

Then at four months of age, Chrystal developed a fungal infection on her bottom. For three weeks we battled it with every anti-fungal preparation our doctor could think of. There was no improvement. I finally decided to do some more research. Although her formula had been adequate for a newborn, it should have been altered when she was two months of age. I altered it. Two days later there was no sign of the fungus.

Gradually, as she became six months of age and older, the warning signs of a developing tumor were beginning to manifest themselves, but we didn't recognize them. Her appetite was excellent, a quart of formula a day, and she was bright-eyed and aware of her surroundings when awake, always happy, and loved playing with her toys. However, she slept entirely too much—all night long—and was never awake for more than two hours at a time during the day. She could not sit up, only roll over and use her arms and hands. "Ah, well, all babies develop differently," we thought.

The first real warning sign came when our pediatrician examined her at six months of age, and mumbled almost under his breath that her spleen felt slightly enlarged. This was in fact the kidney tumor, but it was not large enough yet to be diagnosed.

At eight months of age, the crisis came. I developed a severe digestive complaint, the cause of which we still don't know. I think perhaps the Lord stepped in to open our eyes. I spent a miserable eleven days in the hospital while my husband battled on the home front to keep things in a semblance of order. While he worked, church members took care of our children. Dennis was always exhausted when he got home. He then had to clean up the house, fix meals, get the kids ready for bed, and get everything ready to send them off the next day. As a result, he really never had a chance to handle them.

The day I was released, he took advantage of the opportunity to play with the children, especially Chrystal. I'll never forget the horrible feeling in the pit of my stomach when he came into the bedroom with Chrystal, his face ashen, laid her on the bed, and told me to feel her left side. It felt like rock from the base of her ribs to the top of her pelvis. Neither of us said anything but we were both thinking the dread word "tumor." It was no remote possibility to us because my husband has "familial polyposis" which is hereditary, so our entire diet is geared around cancer prevention, but this was something new because polyposis usually does not show up before the teen years. I questioned Dennis about whether her behavior or eating habits had changed. He told me the ladies that kept her had all reported that she slept almost all day, rarely playing, and he had noticed her appetite had dwindled to a third of what it had been.

We swallowed our fear and called our pediatrician immediately. He asked us to describe the lump over the phone, which we did. He told us it

sounded like an hernia. He wanted to see her immediately. We took her in and after examination; he decided it was her spleen which was enlarged. This organ makes and destroys red blood cells, so he explained that this type of congestion could be caused by something as simple as anemia to something as serious as leukemia. As it was Sunday, he asked us to bring her back Monday for tests.

I took her back and she had a whole series of blood tests and X-rays. The blood tests were negative, and from the X-rays it still appeared to be her spleen. At that point, our wise pediatrician decided it was out of his hands because he couldn't discover any causes. He sent us on to a pediatric surgeon.

This great, skilled man examined our little daughter, looked at her X-rays and then informed me in no uncertain terms that her condition was a matter of life and death. She had what is called a Wilm's tumor on her left kidney, and it had to come out immediately. I went straight to the hospital with her from his office. I had shown him the recipe for her formula and obtained his permission to supply that formula to her in the hospital. In spite of the tumor, she was beautiful and well formed. He was rather surprised at parents making their own formula and was interested in the ingredients. He told me he could see by the results that it must contain everything she needed.

What a blow! We went from having what we thought was an healthy baby to having a sick one who had a 50 percent chance of surviving the operation. We were also told that if the biopsy proved that it was in fact a Wilm's tumor, she would have to undergo several months of chemotherapy. This, we found out, involved its own set of risks. These potentially fatal poisons are designed to poison the cancer cells before they poison the good cells—hopefully. Our surgeon told us that under chemotherapy Chrystal's blood count would drop, her white cell count would increase, and her hair would fall out. She would experience vomiting, diarrhea, irritability, and extreme discomfort.

Whenever the body is under any type of stress, whether mental or physical, extra amounts of nutrients are needed to offset this stress. Chrystal would be subjected to a strange environment with strange people doing strange things to her, undergo a major operation, and then be shot full of poisons. I needed to compensate for this extremely stressful situation in her formula.

My mother is a "backyard nutritionist." I consulted with her. Then I prepared an extra potent formula, and carried it to the hospital for Chrystal. I showed the nurses how to slit nipples and feed her. The more they could get down her before the doctor put her on clear liquids, the better off she would be. They were very much interested in my views on nutrition and fell in love with our baby who almost never cried during the entire ordeal and just smiled a lot and quietly played with her toys and exerciser. She fussed a little because the I.V. interfered with her thumb-sucking.

The day of surgery came and our trepidation reached a climax, but we put our trust in the Lord. She had received blessings from church elders and the best in nutrition. We had done all we could and at that point, her fate rested in the hands of the surgeon. It took him forty-five minutes to complete the operation, and the ear-to-ear smile on his face when he came out put our minds at rest. He was exultant! She had tolerated the surgery beautifully, with not even an hint of trouble. It was amazing, and she was already waking up. When we saw her an hour later she looked better than when she had gone in, and was completely relaxed.

The surgeon told us the tumor had entirely replaced her left kidney. Amazingly it had not begun to spread. She did have a Wilm's tumor, and she had to begin chemotherapy treatments in the hospital. She resumed her formula as soon as possible, but her appetite was not very good. I asked him to give her some vitamins intravenously, especially A and C, before administering her first treatment, which he did.

She did marvelously in the hospital. Doctors and nurses alike exclaimed over her progress and sweet temper. However, when we got her home, she began to vomit and caught a dreadful cold. All of my self-confidence vanished as we fought day and night to get her formula with those desperately needed vitamins into her.

By the time I took her to her first treatment since hospitalization, she was a mess. She had a severe cold, bronchitis, a fever of 103 degrees, was listless, dehydrated, and was still vomiting after every feeding. However, I had done my homework and was armed with a whole bag full of references and was prepared to give a lecture on the value of Vitamin C injections. Chrystal's surgeon met me there, listened to my case, read my references, and was very open minded and receptive. We had been applying Vitamin E oil to her incision several times a day. He could see the results. It had completely healed, and the scar was fading fast. He told me the matter was out of his hands and would rest with the doctor who would give her the treatments, but he would talk to her. He did, and when that lady walked into the room, the antagonism could have been sliced, it was so thick. She informed me that it was ridiculous to have any child on an hyper-vitamin diet, refused to read my references, saying that she had already seen the FDA's report on Vitamin C and the common cold which refuted its value, and in general pooh-poohed nutrition with the contempt she felt it deserved.

I tried to point out to her that the FDA, in its study, had only used its interpretation of the minimum daily adult requirement which is about enough to keep scurvy away and certainly not enough to fight any kind of infection. She countered by asking me if I had degree in the subject. No, I was just an high-school graduate. Obviously I wasn't smart enough to know what I was talking about. She didn't seem to realize that anyone, no matter what their formal education, can gain access to any information they want.

I was so thoroughly frustrated by the time I left there, I was ready to never take Chrystal back. However, after calm consideration at home, I decided I was just going to have to think of some solution, and then go about my business and let the doctor go about hers. Common sense finally slapped me in the face and I felt stupid for not thinking of it sooner. When a person begins vomiting, that person is put on clear liquids, and that's just what I put Chrystal on. I made a formula with distilled water, a little honey and blackstrap molasses, and the vitamins which I had in liquid form which just happened to be the ones she needed the most: her A and D, C, B-complex, and E.

Meanwhile, I was continuing my research efforts, trying to find specific information on the nutritional treatment of Wilm's tumor. Part of the natural treatment I came across included raw goat's milk and egg yolks. Goat's milk is much easier on the digestive system than is cow's milk and is closer in composition to breast milk. We were already giving her the egg yolks in her formula mainly for their iron content, and a supply of raw goat's milk was only a phone call away. As soon as my parents found out, my mother drove from Virginia with a large supply which we froze.

I made up yet another formula. Not only did she keep it down, she thrived on it! Each visit to the cancer clinic amazed the doctors and nurses as they noted her progress and discovered through their questions that she never vomited, never had diarrhea, and never had a single hair fall out. Tests showed that her blood count was never abnormal, her urine never contained unusual cultures, and her X-rays were all perfectly normal.

The final blow to all of the medical profession's predicted vision of gloom came when Chrystal was eleven months old. This time the clinic personnel had not seen her for four weeks since her last treatment. Before surgery, at eight months of age, Chrystal had weighed seventeen pounds and after surgery, only fourteen pounds. The clinic waiting room was filled with youngsters for whom predictions had been fulfilled—bald boys and girls, skeletons with sallow skin and sunken eyes, either listless or crying irritably. In the midst of all of this was bouncing baby Chrystal, a tall 30 inch 20 pound bundle of happy and relaxed vitality, with sparkling eyes and shining golden hair, who at eight months of age could not even sit up because of the huge tumor in her tummy, but who was now almost walking.

Doctors and nurses stared at her. After months of my nutritional views falling on deaf ears, the questions finally came. This time there was no antagonism or ridicule. I only hope they might try our approach or at least suggest it to some of the other poor parents who must be in as much agony as their children.

About the middle of September, 1979, we discovered that Chrystal's fingernails had become so soft that they bent outwards easily and made her fingers sore. I wanted to add some protein powder to her formula, but due to the caution on the label which said to consult a doctor before

administering to children under three, I went to our pediatrician. He had been enthusiastic about the results of our formula on Chrystal and was pleased that I came to him for advice. He told me the chemotherapy would tend to soften her nails and to go ahead and add it. Within two weeks her nails were hardened sufficiently to prevent further difficulty.

Six months from the time of her operation, Chrystal was scheduled for a five consecutive day treatment. Without informing me, they decided to double her dosage. Four hours after I took her home she began to vomit and heave. We had her blessed by church elders, and I made her formula with 8,000 mg. of Vitamin C and doubled the yogurt, alfalfa, papaya enzymes, and Vitamin A. Two and one half hours after she stopped vomiting and was asleep and completely relaxed, I began giving her one to two ounces every two hours and kept this up throughout the night. I increased it to three ounces in the morning, and then to her normal amounts as she wished. Her blood count stayed better than normal, and she had no further difficulties for the rest of the series. The remarkable part of this was that she showed no signs other than the heaves of being sick. She was happy, laughing, and active and seemed to be experiencing no discomfort before or after the convulsions.

Chrystal had her first birthday on July 30, 1979. Four months before we were not sure she would live to be nine months old. Despite her cleft palate she has learned to eat applesauce, which has good digestive enzymes; we give this to her in addition to her formula.

As we learn of more supplements which block, cure, or control cancer, serve to detoxify, or aid in digestion, we add them to her formula. She's still on chemotherapy because the program they prescribed for her lasts six months to a year-and-an-half. However, she's healthier and happier than other babies we've seen who have never had cancer. We're just thankful for the nutritional research which is available, and to publications which make this information more readily available to everyone. We also thank God, whose help we trust.

Postscript: Following chemotherapy, Chrystal's cleft palate was repaired. She then grew up healthy and strong and now lives in New York with children of her own. The only lasting effect of this life-threatening illness was the development of scoliosis as a teenager from the softening of her bones caused by the chemotherapy. She spent a year in a corrective back brace, but it took three inches off her potential height. So, she now stands at 5'11" instead of 6'2". She is a gorgeous Amazon as you can see from the picture on the next page taken August 14, 2008! Pictures of her two lovely children, Brett and Shelly, appear on the following two pages.





